



# PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT

## A HISTORY OF ACTION

ANNUAL REPORT 2005



*Never look down on someone,  
unless you're helping them up*



## PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT

Project Homeless Connect is breaking the myth that the majority of homeless people do not seek assistance and services. It is breaking the myth that homeless people would simply prefer to be on the street. Project Homeless Connect (PHC) is also proving that individuals can play a role in a solution to homelessness. Since its inception October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004, over 5,500 homeless individuals have sought out and received assistance and over 10,000 San Franciscans have volunteered their time to bring assistance and services to homeless people. **The ultimate goal of this project is to connect individuals to the city's continuum of care and provide immediate shelter or stabilization housing with case management to support a path towards permanent housing.**

In San Francisco, a revolution of solutions that challenge the status quo to innovate and reinvent, to rethink and reconnect the people with its city has begun.





# PHC1

October 13, 2004

## AN IDEA BECOMES ACTION

*“Can’t we set up a table on the street to sign people up for the services they need?”*

Mayor Gavin Newsom responds to homelessness with a simple idea.

The Department of Public Health and the Human Services Agency rallied 250 city employees and set up five mini-service stations throughout the Tenderloin and South of Market districts. Outreach teams walked the streets and invited homeless to come to service stations for links to medical treatment, benefits, shelter and other services.

In one day, Project Homeless Connect “connected” 519 homeless San Franciscans with assistance and services.

*“Having worked in homeless services for the past 12 years I must admit that this is the most hopeful and productive time I can recall.”*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

*“I’ve been all over this state homeless for five years, and I’ve never seen anything like this in my life... I just heard about this ‘connect’ thing on the street... They’re saying out there that it’s not bull -- . They say you can get real help. I think they’re right.”*

- Project Homeless Connect Client

1 homeless client was set on the path towards permanent housing.





# PHC2

December 8, 2004

## BUILDING ON SUCCESS

The objective of PHC 2 was to build on the success of the previous event and improve services. Two larger service sites were created with more staff and the beginning of participation of community volunteers was evident. Street outreach was increased and the scope of services in key areas – benefits, medical/mental health/treatment services and exits from the street – were expanded. This outreach day saw the addition of welcomed client amenities such as food and transportation.

Project Homeless Connect “connected” 806 homeless San Franciscans with assistance and services.

49 homeless clients were set on the path towards permanent housing.



*“I really felt like we did some good work today that made a difference. It isn’t often that you get the chance to help someone in physical and emotional pain. We were able to help several others today and everyone on the team appreciated the opportunity to help. I want to salute your staff for taking a seemingly insurmountable problem and applying common sense solutions.”*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

*“I’ve traveled all over the [country] and the programs in San Francisco amazes me, I’ve not seen anything like it anywhere else. Can really see the effort to get people off the street. It’s extremely commendable.”*

- Project Homeless Connect Client



# PHC3

February 17, 2005

## A SERVICE SITE TO MATCH THE GROWTH

575 San Franciscans volunteered to participate at PHC 3. The overwhelming volunteer response far outnumbered city staff requiring that PHC move to the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, a sufficiently large site in a centralized location of San Francisco. Volunteers were trained in order to ensure that homeless clients were treated with respect and dignity throughout personalized services. Nonprofit organizations began to show interest.

Project Homeless Connect "connected" 1,024 homeless San Franciscans with assistance and services in addition they were fed and given personal toiletries.

56 homeless clients were set on the path towards permanent housing.



*“...people were provided with access to a wide range of services – legal, financial, medical, mental health, shelter and housing information, vision care, HIV Testing, free lunch, foot care, wheelchair maintenance, massage, hygiene products, veterinary services and music. It was an amazing collection of people committed to a grass roots approach to addressing the issues of homeless – delivering care in a kind and respectful manner.”*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

*“...a good experience! It also felt great being a part of a unique project for SF... Gavin Newsom was so enthusiastic and hopeful! Made me feel like I was helping instead of complaining about a very complex problem!”*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer



# PHC4

April 21, 2005

## A FULL PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPS

Building on the participation of nonprofit organizations and advocates that began during PHC 3, the growing pool of community volunteers and city workers were joined by dozens of agencies. These groups brought their staff, skills and services to the menu of support offered during PHC street outreach efforts.

Project Homeless Connect “connected” 1,037 homeless San Franciscans and the compliment of services included some case management to follow the outreach day.

*“Instead of suspicion and prideful resentment, our humble overtures were, surprisingly, met with interest and appreciation. Each subsequent encounter became easier and more natural. In no time, word on the street spread. Not only did this community of street dwellers know who we were and what we were doing, but they began to ask questions and directions to the destination for help. No longer were these souls strangers, but rather neighbors in a greater community.”*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

131 homeless clients were set on the path towards permanent housing.





# PHC5

June 3, 2005

## CORPORATE PARTICIPATION BLOSSOMS

From the early support of businesses like Safeway and Starbucks, this outreach day was fueled by major growth in corporate support. Deloitte Touche provided planning support, sweatshirts for every homeless client and 700 volunteers. LensCrafters brought vision care services. SMG provided 2,500 lunches for all homeless clients and volunteers.

Project Homeless Connect "connected" 1,024 homeless San Franciscans with assistance and services.

*"This program is truly amazing in its treatment of clients and services available. Everything from foot washing, applications for general assistance, to vision and medical care. Everyone that entered those doors was treated with dignity and respect. So many lives were touched by the care offered."*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

*"I was completely amazed by the turnout of over 2,000 volunteers. The energy in the room was electric. The atmosphere was up, optimistic, committed and filled with heart. I was deeply moved by the sight of all these people voluntarily working together towards a common goal. What power there was in that room!"*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

146 homeless clients were set on the path towards permanent housing.





*“Project Homeless Connect is great, very impressive. We’d like to find a way to replicate something similar in New York.”*

- Laura Grund, New York Department of Health

# PHC6

August 4, 2005

## LOCAL SUCCESS BECOMES A NATIONAL MODEL

Representatives from 20 cities came to see a team of 1,200 volunteers, corporate partners, community organizations and city agencies welcome, assess, serve and support 1,133 homeless adults found on the street that day. Medical services expanded to include dental triage. Benefit services expanded to include workforce development. Clients received medical/mental health care, treatment, benefit advocacy, legal services, information, appointments, support, food, clothing, massage, wheelchair repair, shelter and respect.

126 homeless clients were set on the path towards permanent housing.

## Bush official lauds new tack on homeless

‘Nothing else like it’ in America, he says of aid by volunteers

By Kevin Fagan  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

boomed Philip Mangano, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. “This” — and he held his arms wide to take in the tableau — “is the beginning of the end of homelessness.”

The 2,000 citizens and workers

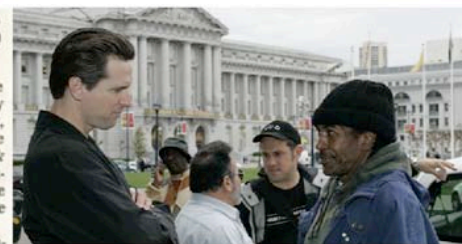
tance, said organizer Alex Tourk, deputy chief of staff for Mayor Gavin Newsom.

Seventy-eight even got eyeglasses in a new Project Connect service that had ophthalmologists test their vision and Lenscrafters create the glasses in time for them to walk out the door with them.

nect in October with 200 volunteers, mostly city employees, walking through the Tenderloin looking for homeless people to help into services or housing. Since then, he has conducted a Project Connect every month, with one month being a planning and training session and the next

“When we looked at all the things we could do in the Bay Area that would have an impact, homelessness was No. 1 on the list,” said Jack Russi, Deloitte & Touche regional managing partner. “And with this event, we knew we could really change some lives today.”

Tourk said that given the con-





# 10,182

*volunteers in the first year*

*“All I can say about the event on Friday is that while volunteering I was reminded of the many challenges and issues that people who are homeless face on a daily basis; issues like not knowing if there will be a shelter bed available for them that night, needing medical attention but not having health insurance and feeling hungry and thirsty and not knowing where their next meal will come from. My experience volunteering reminded me of the many reasons why some patients who are homeless feel the need to express their frustrations while they are patients... and why I need to have compassion for every patient that comes through here”*

- Project Homeless Connect Volunteer

## PHC into the future

- Outreach Days are continuing every other month.
- Volunteers – a core PHC resource – continue to be recruited and trained.
- Corporate and nonprofit partnerships increase as part of on-going growth.
- Services are expanding and unmet needs are addressed as identified.
- Funds are being developed to support expansion of the city's successful permanent supportive housing programs so that PHC clients have increased opportunities for ending homelessness.





# PHC1-6

*“My Client wanted me to e-mail you and thank the Mayor’s office for getting him off the streets that he had been on 15 years. [He] is doing really really well in his permanent housing. He just wants to give you guys and the Mayor a big THANK YOU. Once again I myself am very grateful to all of you.”*

- Haight Ashbury Free Medical

## STATISTICS OF ONE YEAR’S SUCCESS

### 5,506 Homeless Adults seen at PHC sites.

5,000 received a meal, toiletries, sweatshirt and/or socks.

1,900 were counseled about housing options and individual housing plans.

1,328 received medical and mental health care, and behavioral health treatment.

750 were assisted with benefits.

427 were given counsel regarding legal issues.

218 received vision care and glasses.

**509 individuals who were on the streets were given immediate shelter or stabilization housing with case management to support a path to permanent housing.**

A special thank you to one of our partners, Full Circle Fund, for making the annual report possible.







# PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT

Project Homeless Connect is making real change in the lives of individuals. The enthusiasm of committed volunteers can show our nation a better, more humane, more practical way to transition people out of homelessness. Project Homeless Connect can become the beginning of the end of homelessness. Volunteer Today!